

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Montebello

other names/site number VDHR #104-0043

2. Location

street & number 1700 Stadium Road not for publication

city or town Charlottesville vicinity

state Virginia code VA county Independent City code 540 Zip 22903

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined eligible for the
National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

☐ private
☐ public-local
☒ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 2 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	buildings
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	objects
<u> 2 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

 N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:	Sub:
<u> DOMESTIC </u>	<u> Single Dwelling </u>
<u> DOMESTIC </u>	<u> Secondary Structure </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:	Sub:
<u> DOMESTIC </u>	<u> Single Dwelling </u>
<u> DOMESTIC </u>	<u> Secondary Structure </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)EARLY REPUBLIC: Jeffersonian Classicism

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)foundation BRICKroof METAL-Tinwalls BRICK

other

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.
-

4 _____

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Catherine Kahl

Organization: University of Virginia School of Architecture date March 21, 2003

street & number: 111 Ivy Drive, Apt. 10 telephone 434.220.5335

city or town Charlottesville state VA zip code 22903

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name University of Virginia

street & number P. O. Box 400726 telephone

city or town Charlottesville state VA zip code 22904-4726

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Montebello
City of Charlottesville, VA

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7. Summary Description:

Montebello, a dwelling begun in 1819, sits on top of a hill southwest of the original core of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. It is now adjacent to residential areas as well as university properties including the stadium and gymnasium. John M. Perry, one of the workmen who worked with Thomas Jefferson at Monticello and on his many building projects at the University of Virginia, built the central block of Montebello in 1819-20. The house is a single-pile, brick I-house plan with a central hall flanked by a room on each side. Some years later came the addition of single-cell, single-story wings. Montebello is an example of Early Republican architecture reflecting Jeffersonian Classicism with its three-part façade and three-bay, two-story central block with single-story flanking wings. There is a detached garage (c. 1920) to the right of the house. The two-car garage is a one-and-one-half-story brick structure on a cinder block foundation. Originally, Montebello was the main house on the estate, but over time the property was divided. The University of Virginia purchased the remaining property and land in 1963. Under the care of the University, the buildings have been well attended to and remain in excellent condition with repairs consistently done in a historically accurate manner. The 1970s brought the addition of a glass sun porch on the east side of the main house. A road, Montebello Circle, encircles the house and its immediate grounds. Although the house is in a densely populated area, Montebello retains a rural air and is set back from the road and surrounded by tall trees. The approach is through brick gates and up an oval-shaped drive to the main house. To the rear of the house is a terraced garden with brick walls and large hedges of boxwood.

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Detailed Description:

Montebello is a brick dwelling with a metal gable roof. The original house consists of a two-story, three-bay central block flanked by one-story, one-bay wings. The central block is flanked by interior end chimneys that serve it and the wings. The front wall of the main block is laid in Flemish bond, the rest of the walls are in common bond. The walls of the single-cell, one-story wings are in a five-course American brick bond. The main entrance on the west façade is sheltered by a central, single-story Doric porch, raised five steps. It features a full entablature crowned by a Chinese Chippendale balustrade. The front door is a six-panel door under a simple tripartite transom window. In the mid-19th century perpendicular single-story wings were added behind the existing wings. They have American bond and make the overall form of the house U-shaped. Originally there was a Victorian verandah between the new wings. This was replaced by a three-bay Doric porch based on the original front porch. Since the land falls away steeply from front to back this porch is raised on piers (some of which may be reused from the earlier verandah). A small sun porch was added to the end of the south wing in the 20th century.

The front and rear doors open into a central hall, providing cross-ventilation, and also housing the stairs to both the second floor and the basement. The main stair rises in one long flight. It has simple balusters, square in section, and a round unmolded rail. The spandrel is completely paneled with rows of panels about 18 inches square. The stair brackets feature a scroll pattern. In the flanking rooms are Federal mantels with colonettes. The one in the north room has a three-part frieze with sunbursts on the center panels and arched recesses on the blocks above the colonettes. The mantels are typical of ones found in many of the houses constructed by workmen trained by Thomas Jefferson. Also typical is the continuous pedestal wainscot. This occurs in many of Jefferson's own buildings as well as those of his protégés. On the second floor the woodwork is simpler but the mantels are identical to many found in the original buildings of the University of Virginia. The second-floor rooms have no wainscot, just a baseboard. Moving beyond the original central block, the two wings were added later by John Perry's son-in-law, George Wilson Spooner, who inhabited the house from 1836 to 1865. They have detail similar to the rest of the house and include fireplaces. The southern wing has a bedroom and the northern wing is used as the dining room. East of the dining room is a 20th-century kitchen addition. North of the dining room is a wood frame and glass sun porch added by the University of Virginia upon its acquisition of the property.

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Summary Statement of Significance

The significance of Montebello stems from the relationship of its builder with Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States and founder of the University of Virginia. John M. Perry acquired the Montebello property in 1814. He knew Jefferson well since he had worked on the enlargement of Monticello, on Jefferson's barn, and on Jefferson's retreat, Poplar Forest. In 1817 he sold to the Commonwealth of Virginia the land on which the University of Virginia was to be built. In fact he was present at the laying of the corner stone of the university in the same year and, indeed, was the principle carpenter of the cornerstone building itself, Pavilion VII. He also worked on many more of the institution's new structures including the Rotunda, some of the pavilions, the serpentine walls, the hotels, and most of the rows of dormitory rooms. Perry had a more extensive involvement in the physical erection of the university than any other workman and is certainly one of the most important of Jefferson's circle of builders. His own house, Montebello, exhibits Jeffersonian building practices, proportions, and materials in their most basic forms. His simple front porch may be the first of its type, the forerunner of many more. The roles of Jefferson's workmen in the evolution of architecture in the late Federal Period are now the subject of intensive study. The role of John M. Perry and Montebello are starting points for this undertaking.

Justification of Criteria: Montebello is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion C for Architecture. It is an example of Early Republican architecture reflecting Jeffersonian Classicism and was executed by one of the chief workmen who assisted in the construction of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and the University of Virginia.

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Historical Background

John M. Perry began acquiring land in Albemarle County near Charlottesville in 1804. In 1814 he purchased the tract of land that included Monroe Hill, a house begun by James Monroe. In 1817, he sold that property for the site of the future University of Virginia, begun three years later, with the provision that he be hired as a builder for the project. He worked there off and on for a number of years. He built Montebello between 1819 and 1820 on a hill in sight of the university.

At Montebello Perry built in Jefferson's Roman idiom, but the form of the house is a basic I-house with wings. It is interesting that Perry did not choose to use oval or octagonal rooms, skylights, flat roofs, or other Jeffersonian innovations. He used the simple three-bay Doric porch that became a hallmark of many later Jeffersonian-inspired buildings. In its spare simplicity the interior relates to the classrooms and student rooms at the university. These interior treatments are early examples of what became widely popular over the next two decades. In addition to the university, Perry also worked for Jefferson at his mill, his Poplar Forest retreat, and at Monticello. He also built Frascati in Orange County, a new main block for Castle Hill in Albemarle County, and the Charlottesville Presbyterian Church. For fifteen years he owned the Hydraulic Mills, in Albemarle County, that produced great amounts of lumber for building.

Perry left Virginia in the mid-1830s for Missouri. His son-in-law, George Spooner lived at Montebello until his death in 1865. By 1870 Charles Scott Venable acquired the property. Venable, immediately after serving on Robert E. Lee's staff during the Civil War, became professor of mathematics in 1865 and retired in 1896. He was chairman of the faculty twice and is credited with persuading the General Assembly of Virginia to more than double the university's annual appropriation. He also successfully championed the expansion of the curriculum. From 1875 to 1887 William M. Thornton, Professor of Applied Mathematics and Engineering, lived at Montebello. Thornton followed Venable as chairman of the faculty in 1888 and became the first dean of engineering in 1904. The Venable family sold the property to Eva Warren in 1904 and she sold it to Zack Holladay in 1907. The Holladays began the subdivision of the property and sold off lots. In 1917 they sold the house and about an acre and a half to Isaac Kimber Moran, a retired Treasurer and Bursar of the University. His descendants, active and well remembered members of the university community, owned it until 1962 when Montebello was purchased by the University of Virginia. Montebello is a property that is important to the study of the development of architecture in Virginia and with the

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growth and mission of the university. Its builder was associated with the founding of the school and many of its occupants were key figures in the education of generations of students.

Major Bibliographical References

Dabney, Virginus. *Mr. Jefferson's University: A History*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981.

Information packets, maps and reference materials from the Facilities Management Resource Center at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

Lay, K. Edward. *The Architecture of Jefferson Country: Charlottesville and Albemarle County, Virginia*. Charlottesville: Albemarle County Historic Society, 2000.

Madison, Andrea S. "Architecture in Virginia: Montebello: Charlottesville, Virginia." University of Virginia: Undergraduate Thesis. 1994.

Verbal Boundary Description

Montebello is identified as parcel 160024000 on the tax parcel maps for the City of Charlottesville, Virginia.

Boundary Justification

The boundary for Montebello includes nearly two acres of the land that has historically been associated with the house and that today comprises the Montebello parcel.

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Section _Photo List_ Page __6__

The following information is common to all photographs:

Subject: Montebello

Location: Charlottesville, Virginia

VA DHR file number: 104-0043

VA DHR negative number: 20377

Negatives filed: VA. Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA

Date of photographs: February 2003

Photographer: Catherine Wallace Kahl, University of Virginia Student

- 1 Of 7: Montebello from the front gate
- 2 Of 7: Main (east) façade
- 3 Of 7: Rear (west) façade
- 4 Of 7: Southwest corner
- 5 Of 7: Mantel in parlor
- 6 Of 7: Detail of stair
- 7 Of 7: Mantel in dining room